

Got something to say? Take it to the airwaves.

A man listens to a radio in rural Kenya. (© AP Images)



What kind of communication is readily available, cheap and reliable even when there is no electricity? Answer: radio! The medium [maintains its dominance](#) in areas that do not have good Internet connectivity. For some YALI Networkers, getting on the air may be the most effective way to tell a wide audience about the projects you are doing and attract new supporters.

Many living in sub-Saharan African countries are taking advantage of community radio networks, which have been funded primarily by external donor countries, church organizations and international development agencies, and through advertising.

Network member Michael Kganyago has founded two youth community radio stations in South Africa: Tshwane Youth Street Radio and Polokwane Youth Street FM. While he acquires the equipment to get his stations on the air, he has been visiting neighboring radio outlets to conduct interviews and call-in programs about the [YALI Network online courses](#).

Jarius Andrew Greaves wrote from Liberia that he has live programs on local FM stations and pre-records another that is distributed on United Nations Mission in Liberia Radio. Ephrem Bekele said he has used his appearances on Ethiopian radio to play all of the YALI Network online civic leadership courses on the air.

If you have an interview coming up, here are some helpful tips [from the web](#) and other Network members to help get you prepared:

- Have a brief bio ready that the host can use to introduce you.
- Know what you want to say in advance. Have three main points you want your listeners to come away with. Additional material is fine, but don't overload your audience!
- Radio is show business, so try to entertain while educating. Think of interesting stories to share.
- Keep it short. You can say a lot in 10-20 seconds, and that makes an easy sound bite for the program host to use for continued promotion.
- Listen to the show in advance to get familiar with the host's style and the structure of the program.

Network member Ako Essan Emile from Côte d'Ivoire works in a radio station and advises that you know your target audience when you are reaching out to a station. For example, if you want to reach teenage listeners, you will have better luck on a station that plays contemporary pop rather than jazz or classical music.

Through friends, Senegal's Oumar Ba was able to get on a radio show to discuss his involvement in the #YALIGoesGreen campaign for a special Earth Day broadcast. He shared this advice:

"Don't be afraid of being turned down. Just go to a local radio station you know, explain to them clearly who you are, the courses you have done with the online YALI program, show them the certificate you have got, [and] if possible write a résumé," he said.
